

Westridge PTA September minutes
September 10, 2021

Members present: Alissa Clark, Becky Reid Eschete, Katie Asplund, Hallie Wemmie, Amy Seidelman, Gina Lewis, Lindsay Millang, Nancy Cullen, Colleen Boyer, Suyau Woehler, Heidi Moore, Tenille Hamilton, Jaffer Ali, Becca Jachsen, Ashley Thoreson, Beth Brewer, Jeannette Barnes, Cindy Mitchell, Suchitra Sinha, Emily Mayfield, Dara Mmakohoniuk-Martin

Call to order: Meeting called to order 9:19 am by Becky Reid Eschete.

- Kevin Long, WDMCS Operations manager is here today to provide updates on Westridge construction projects. Phase 1 is mostly completed and consists of the exterior of the addition as well as some interior work. There have been updates to the cooling system which is now running better. Projected completion is in October for exterior work. Parts of Phase 2 are now starting up, beginning with concrete floors inside the addition soon. Scheduled completion of interior work is estimated at mid-December. Phase 3 will take place next summer and includes additional interior improvements with heating, cooling, etc. with estimated completion of phase 3 in August of 2022.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding traffic flow at Westridge at pick up and drop off times. On Friday, the city of WDM observed problems regarding current patterns, especially on 56th street and around the north parking lot. The city has made it clear that something different needs to be done.

Effective Monday afternoon, the school will begin blocking entrance to the north parking lot with cones once it is full. WDM Police as well as the City of WDM have been asked to come monitor the Monday afternoon pick up process, but it is unlikely that they will do so. It is not yet known who will stand outside and have the task of managing traffic cones to close off the lot. The plan is to have drivers go south on 56th from EP True and get in line to enter the parking lot. Multiple concerns were brought up by members regarding this plan and suggestions were made to possibly alleviate some of the problems. Becky asked if the city could possibly come provide some temporary monitoring of the process and Kevin shared that the city has already been requested to help repeatedly but that their role is to monitor, not help. It was also discussed that the police department has declined thus far to come assist with traffic and safety further south on Beechtree and 56th St. area. There are parent concerns regarding safety in that area for kids who are walking. We have asked for no parking signs but were declined. School administration voiced that they all share the same concerns and frustrations but getting help from the city has been a problem and that parents/PTA could try contacting them directly to voice these same concerns @ Chris Scott – Chief of Police and Eric Peterson, traffic engineer for the city of WDM.

Traffic patterns will not change with the various phases of construction. Concern by a parent was expressed for ADA compliance if the lot is blocked and front spots are closed for construction. Spots up front should be unblocked very soon. Also if the lot is blocked, how do preschool parents park to get their students? Lots of questions without good answers at this time.

Brief update on the field. It will not be leveled but will be seeded in its current shape in approximately two weeks. There are two large drainage pipes that members asked if a child could maybe get stuck and Kevin informs there are guards on the pipes to prevent that.

Kevin was thanked for discussing this topic today and he will continue to try to work with the city to develop a plan that makes sense and provides safety for Westridge families.

- Teacher's report: Jillian Robbins not present today to provide updates.
- Principal's report: Mrs. Brewer thanks the parents for being here today and advocating for the student's regarding the issues related to traffic and construction. Mrs. Brewer and Mrs. Barnes both have really enjoyed having the kids back from summer break. They are spending some time in classrooms reading to kids, leaving positive sticky notes, spending time at lunch and recess getting to know kids and building those relationships.

Updates on snack policy – The district has now allowed snacks for kids in the classroom again. Teachers are implementing this in their classrooms and everyone is glad to have this for the kids.

Updates on field trips: Teacher proposals and even some approvals have begun to come in. Approval turnaround times has been around two days. Mrs. Brewer has encouraged teachers to think creatively and some ideas were presented as options. It was expressed that parents were frustrated at the end of last year that many events continued to be canceled for the kids and want to know that the kids will have better access to those things this year. Alissa Clark reminded that the PTA will assist in being flexible with funds if additional buses are needed for a field trip to be approved. The 4th grade bike ride was also brought up and Mrs. Brewer reports that current 4th grade teachers are looking into getting it done this year.

Updates on class parties: Class parties will be happening this year but some things look different due to no parent volunteers being allowed to the classroom for parties. Different ideas were discussed such as pre-packaged craft kits, outdoor parties or classroom movies. Mrs. Brewer said they will support creative ideas. Katie Asplund said volunteer spots for classrooms are pretty empty and Alissa reminded that class parties really cannot happen without parents' involvement. We will get it in the Westridge

weekly that volunteer spots are still open. Members believe if parents know they are just needing to drop off supplies they may be more willing to help.

Spirit wear update: The spirit wear store is ready. Katie will add a post to facebook and Mrs. Brewer will get that information out to families.

- Secretary's report: Minutes from the last meeting in May were reviewed and Alissa moved to approve minutes. Becky seconds and they are approved.

- Treasurer's report: Teachers have begun submitting for reimbursements from their yearly allotment of \$175. Last year a grant was received for 6th grade parties/activities but we are still waiting on a check from the district.

- Other current business:
 - 6th grade activities are headed by Brooke Nelson who was not present but provided an update via email. All sub-committees are currently chaired and planning has begun. Sixth grade parents should look for more info sent out later this month.
 - Hospitality committee: Provided a back to school lunch on August 23 for teachers. Last year there were a lot of individually pre-packaged meals provided due to Covid concerns but this year we are planning to get back to standard meals which are much more cost effective. Hospitality committee usually provides around 7-8 meals a year for the teachers. Alissa is looking for a replacement committee chair for after this year and anyone who is interested should let her know.
 - Booster Packs: Elizabeth Larson is looking for driving volunteers to pick up food packs at the Learning Resource Center and deliver to Westridge on Thursdays. If interested in helping, please provide an email address and we will get that list to Elizabeth to coordinate.
 - School supplies: Becky thanked those who ordered school supply packs this year and that thanks to money earned through that the school was provided approximately 7 school supply packs per grade level given to the guidance counselor... \$2,500 worth of donated supplies.

- Important dates/Upcoming activities:
 - September 21: Fall pictures
 - October 8: Next PTA meeting 9:15 am, same location
 - October 8: Fall classroom parties

- October 11: no school
- October 25: no school
- Yearbook info and student directories coming out soon!

Without objection, Becky adjourns the meeting at 10:20 am.